

# **\*\*ATTENTION\*\***

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5/91

**Pygmy Shrew**

*Sorex hoyi*

**Range:**

Found throughout most of Canada to Alaska and south into the continental United States (Long 1972).

**Washington Distribution:**

Presently confirmed only in Stevens County (Stinson and Reichel 1985).

**Habitat Requirements:**

Pygmy shrews are considered to be among the rarest of North American small mammals (Ryan 1986). Consequently, little is known about their habitat requirements. Pygmy shrews are insectivores and have been reported to feed upon crickets, millipedes (Stinson, pers. comm.), adult beetles, spiders and various insect larvae (Ryan 1986, Whitaker and French 1984).

Long (1972, 1974) found pygmy shrews in conifer stands associated with dense ground vegetation; he stated that the shrews preferred seral and boreal habitats where wet and dry soils occurred in close proximity. They were found in swamps and marshes in spring and apparently preferred dry soils in late summer.

Pygmy shrews may also be associated with disturbed, seral habitats such as sandy blowouts, cutover forests, flooded areas, and cultivated lands (Long 1974). In Washington, pygmy shrews were captured in upland, uneven-aged, second-growth coniferous forests (Stinson and Reichel 1985).

**Limiting Factors:**

Unknown.

**Management Recommendations:**

Destruction of ground vegetation should be avoided in areas where pygmy shrews are found. Insecticides and herbicides, which could reduce insect prey abundance or herbaceous cover, should not be applied where pygmy shrews occur.

**References:**

Long, C.A. 1972. Notes on habitat preference and reproduction in pygmy shrews, *Microsorex*. Can. Field Nat. 86:155-160.

\_\_\_\_\_. 1974. *Microsorex hoyi* and *Microsorex thompsoni*. Mammalian Species 33:1-4.

Ryan, J.M. 1986. Dietary overlap in sympatric populations of pygmy shrews *Sorex hoyi* and masked shrews *Sorex cinereus*, in Michigan. Can. Field. Nat.

100(2):225-228.

Stinson, D.W. and J.D. Reichel. 1985. Rediscovery of the pygmy shrew in Washington. *Murrelet* 66(2):59-60.

Whitaker, J.O., Jr. and T.W. French. 1984. Foods of six species of sympatric shrews from New Brunswick. *Can. J. Zool.* 62:622-626.

**Key Points:**

**Habitat Requirements:**

- Habitat requirements poorly known; dense ground vegetation and interspersed wet and dry soils may be important habitat elements.

**Management Recommendations:**

- Maintain ground vegetation in areas where pygmy shrews occur.
- Do not apply herbicides or insecticides in areas where pygmy shrews occur.